UWS 77a: UNIVERSITY WRITING SEMINAR

M. W 10:10 – 11:00
Instructor: Ms. Diana Renn
Office: Rabb 255; Office Hours: TBA
Phone: English Department, x62 130 (messages) ; E-mail: renn@brandeis.edu
Class Website: TBA

OBJECTIVES:
This course is designed to help you develop and strengthen your academic writing and analytical skills, with an emphasis on rhetoric (the effective use of language with a specific audience and purpose in mind). Our goal in this course is to use rhetorical strategies in our writing consciously rather than intuitively. We will also work on reading rhetorically, with critical attention to the methods of argument and persuasion employed by others. We will read and discuss a wide range of essays, as well as your own works in progress. We will discuss aspects of effective discourse (logos, pathos, ethos, structure, style, diction) and the writing process (invention, planning, drafting, revising, editing). Other areas to be covered include: bridging the personal and the academic, avoiding formulaic writing, and developing a wider range of organizational strategies. By the end of this course, you should have improved your ability to control your own writing process, to evaluate the quality of others people’s arguments, and to articulate your own position and ideas clearly, persuasively, and eloquently.

REQUIRED TEXTS:
Peterson, Brereton and Hartman, The Norton Reader (10th edition)
Corbett and Connors, Classical Rhetoric For the Modern Student
Hackett (Style Guide)

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:
There are six essay assignments, the last of which will be a significant revision of a previous essay. I will make available a sample page of the paper format I require. At the end of the semester, you will hand in a portfolio of all your written work.

There are also numerous short writing exercises. Sometimes you will complete these in class, but more often they will be assigned as homework. The exercises are designed to help you practice skills covered in class and to prepare for the essay assignments. Exercises will not receive letter grades, but I will note the effort put into them and mark them “excellent,” “satisfactory,” and “unsatisfactory.”

WRITING WORKSHOPS:
A draft of each essay will be evaluated and discussed during small group, in-class workshops throughout the semester. Participation in writing workshops is critical. Unless a complete draft of your paper has been critiqued in a workshop, it will not qualify as a final draft, thus becoming a late paper. You are also expected to read and critique your peers’ work carefully and conscientiously. A separate handout will describe workshop procedures and guidelines in more detail.
LATE WORK POLICY:
If you have not made any prior arrangement with me, late papers will be docked one letter grade for each day that they are late. You are solely responsible for making sure that your work is in on time. I do not accept printer or computer excuses for late assignments. Work for another class is also not an acceptable excuse for late assignments.

CONFERENCES:
The third hour of this writing seminar will be used for individual conferences with me about your writing (approximately 15-20 minutes), to take place at regular intervals throughout the semester. You must attend your scheduled conferences. I will inform you in advance of the schedules. In addition, you are encouraged to drop by during my office hours or make an appointment to further discuss any aspect of your work or your progress in the class. Please think of my office as an extension of the classroom.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:
You are expected to attend class regularly. Late arrivals and early departures will be noted and may adversely affect your overall grade. More than three unexcused absences will certainly jeopardize your grade. Please try to notify me in advance if you cannot come to class. It is your responsibility to contact me or a classmate to obtain information and handouts from a missed class. Handouts and schedule/assignment changes will usually be posted on the class website, but it’s best to contact someone first to make sure that you have the most up-to-date information and materials.

ACADEMIC HONESTY:
You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work. The University policy on academic honesty is distributed annually as section 5 of the Rights and Responsibilities handbook. Instances of alleged dishonesty will be forwarded to the Office of Campus Life for possible referral to the Student Judicial System. Potential sanctions include failure in the course and suspension from the University. If you have any questions about my expectations, please ask. In this class, academic dishonesty would most likely involve using ideas from a book, journal, or the Internet without adding a citation or footnote indicating the source of the ideas, or deliberately attempting to present someone else’s ideas as your own. On the other hand, workshopping and editing papers with your peers, making and incorporating suggestions for improvement, do NOT constitute academic dishonesty in this class.

GRADING:
To pass this course, you must satisfactorily meet all of the requirements. A separate handout will explain my grading standards for papers and class participation in detail.

In general, the “Class Participation” part of your grade concerns attendance in class and at scheduled conferences, participation in editing workshops and class discussions, on-time completion of assignments, and efforts on drafts and revisions.
Writing Exercises: 5%
Essay #1 (Rhetorical Analysis; 2-3 pages): 5%
Essay #2 (Personal Essay; 2-3 pages): 10%
Essay #3 (Definition/Process; 3-5 pages): 15%
Essay #4 (Argument I; 3-5 pages): 15%
Essay #5 (Argument II; 5-7 pages): 20%
Essay #6 (Significant Revision Project; 5-7 pages): 20%
Class Participation: 10%

If you are a student with a documented physical, psychological, or learning disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

NR = Norton Reader  
CR = Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student

Note: “Writing Due” indicates when formal essay assignments are due. Short writing exercises will be completed in class or as homework; I will announce due dates as we go along, but in general you will be turning in one exercise per week.

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wed., 9/6</td>
<td><strong>Introduction to the UWS</strong></td>
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<td>Mon., 9/11</td>
<td><strong>The Rhetorical Situation: Purpose and Audience</strong></td>
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<td>George Orwell, “Politics and the English Language” (NR, 575-584)</td>
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<td>CR, pp. 1-5, 15-26</td>
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<td><strong>Writing Due:</strong> 2 page diagnostic essay</td>
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<td>Wed., 9/13</td>
<td><strong>Style Workshop: Avoiding Cliches and “Deadwood” Phrases.</strong></td>
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<td>Apothegms by William Blake, Mason Cooley, Ben Franklin, La Rochefoucauld. (NR, 748-750, 753-761)</td>
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<td>CR, pp. 116-117 (on Maxims)</td>
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<td>Mon., 9/18</td>
<td><strong>Invention Strategies: Classical Topoi, Heuristics</strong></td>
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<td>Casey Miller and Kate Swift, “Who’s in Charge of the English Language?” (NR, 550-555)</td>
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<td>CR, pp. 84-88, 138-141</td>
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<td>Wed., 9/20</td>
<td><strong>Writing Workshop #1, Revision Strategies.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Writing Due:</strong> Complete Draft of Essay #1</td>
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<td>Mon., 9/25</td>
<td><strong>Narration. Using Personal Experience and Voice.</strong></td>
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<td>James Baldwin, “Stranger in the City” (NR, 375-384)</td>
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<td>Vanessa Ochs, “Not in My Backyard” (NR, 368-375)</td>
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<td>CR, pp 270-276</td>
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Wed., 9/27  **Style Workshop: Figures of Speech (The Tropes)**
CR, pp. 396-411
Writing Due: Final Version of Essay #1

Mon., 10/2  **Description**
Pico Iyer, “The Contagion of Innocence” (NR, 310-318)

Wed., 10/4  **Style Workshop: Figures of Speech (Schemes of Construction)**.
CR, pp. 381-395

Mon., 10/9  **NO CLASSES (Yom Kippur)**

Wed., 10/11  **Writing Workshop #2. Revision Strategies**.
Writing Due: Complete draft of Essay #2

Mon., 10/16  **Definition**
“How to Define” (short article on reserve at the library)
Sven Birkerts, “Homo Virtualis” (NR, 240-250)
CR, pp. 33-38, 88-91

Wed., 10/18  **Style Workshop: Diction**
CR, pp. 341-354
Ambrose Bierce, selections from *The Devils Dictionary* (NR, 751-753)
Writing Due: Final Version Essay #2

Mon., 10/23  **Process Analysis**
Garrison Keillor, “How To Write a Letter” (NR, 562-564)
Wayne C. Booth, “Boring From Within: The Art of the Freshman Essay” (NR, pp. 495-505)

Wed., 10/25  **Style Workshop: Paragraph Unity, Development, Coherence**.
**Introductions**.
CR, pp. 260-270

Op-Eds (NR, 402-422)
CR, pp. 27-31

Wed., 11/1  **Writing Workshop #3. Revision Strategies**.
Writing Due: Complete Draft of Essay #3
**Ethos (Ethical Appeal)**
Jonathan Rauch, “In Defense of Prejudice” (NR, 677-686)
CR, pp. 77-77

**Logical Reasoning. Syllogisms. Logical Fallacies.**
Jonathan Swift, “A Modest Proposal” (NR, 848-854)
CR, pp. 38-52, 60-71
Writing Due: Final Version of Essay #3

**Pathos (Emotional Appeal). Persuasion Strategies.**
Martin Luther King, Jr., “Letter From Birmingham Jail” (NR, 887-900)
CR, pp. 77-84

**Writing Workshop #4**
Writing Due: Complete Draft of Essay #4

**Comparison/Contrast; Division/Classification.**
Gloria Anzaldua, “How to Tame a Wild Tongue” (NR, 537-543)
Richard Rodriguez, “Aria” (NR, 531-537)
CR, pp. 91-100

**Writing Workshop #5**
Writing: Complete Draft of Essay #5

**Using Evidence; Avoiding Plagiarism.**
Jamaica Kincaid, “Purloined Letters” (NR, 686-693)

**The Essay as a Genre: Limitations and Possibilities**
Writing: Final Version of Essay #5

Essay #6 (revision project) portfolios of all writing will be due Wednesday, 12/13, at my office

THIS SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT THE DISCRETION OF THE INSTRUCTOR.
COURSE SYLLABUS

Required Texts:


Course Requirements and Policies:

**Attendance.** Since we only meet once a week, I expect you to attend every class. I will allow one absence during the semester. After that, every unexcused absence will result in a one-third grade reduction (e.g. from a B+ to a B). If you miss more than 3 (?) classes, departmental policy mandates that you fail this course. If you anticipate being away, please discuss your absence with me ahead of time. And please try to avoid being late for class -- it is distracting and rather rude.

**Late Papers.** In the interest of fairness, I will lower your grade for any late work you submit. If you have to be absent the day an assignment is due, please let me know in advance, so that we can arrange a time for you to turn in your work. I will not accept any homework or essays outside the class unless you have a previous arrangement with me.

**Class Participation** is essential in this course. Please come prepared to discuss the day’s reading and writing assignments. Along with attendance, your participation will compose a part of your final grade. Please be considerate and don’t interrupt your peers during class discussion.

**Writing Assignments** for this course will consist of 4 essays, all of which you will be able to revise. Revision will provide you with the opportunity to improve your writing and I will raise the paper grade if the improvement is significant, not merely cosmetic. All writing assignments must be typed, double-spaced, with font size 12. Aside from the in-class writing I will not accept handwritten work. One last thing -- before turning in your essays please be sure to check your spelling on the computer.

**Workshops.** We will spend considerable amount of time on in-class revision and peer-review. Workshops will provide you with an opportunity to receive feedback on your writing from the other students and, in turn, look at their work.

**Plagiarism.** All the work you will do in this course must be entirely your own. We will be discussing the issues of academic dishonesty throughout the course of
the semester and learning the proper ways to document your sources. In the meantime, please let me know if you have any questions on the subject.

Grading

Attendance and Class Participation  10%
Essays  75%
In-class writing and homework  15%

* Please don’t bring food to class -- you will find that crunching on a Caesar salad or demolishing a turkey sandwich during the discussion of rhetorical appeals greatly impairs your diction and reasoning, and causes me an even greater distress. I don’t have any objections to indulging in an occasional soda or a coffee, however.

If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made to you in this class, please see me immediately.

TENTATIVE OUTLINE

August 31
HOMEWORK: NR : Joan Didion: On Going Home
WL: Ch.1
Handbook:: sections lc-d.

September 7
HOMEWORK: Essay 1 (due 9/11 to me and your peers)
WL : Ch.3, pp.67-74

September 14
HOMEWORK: Rewrite essay 1.
NR : Charles Lamb: A Bachelor’s Complaint of the Behaviour of Married People.
Handbook: sections 4a-f

September 21
HOMEWORK: NR : Northrop Frye: The Motive for Metaphor Nietzsche: Apollonianism and Dionysianism (handout)
WL : Ch.4.(pp.94-106),Ch.6.
September 28

Comparison/Contrast; Division/Classification. Argument strategies.
Discussion on reading. In-class writing.

HOMEWORK: Essay 2;
WL: Ch.7;
NR: Susan Sontag: *A Century of Cinema*

October 5

Analysis. Discussion on reading. Workshop.
HOMEWORK: Rewrite essay 2.
WL: Ch.8 (pp.202-14)
NR: Martin Luther King: *Letter from Birmingham Jail*

October 12

Discussion on reading. In-class writing.
HOMEWORK: Essay 3.
Handbook: section 46.
WL: Ch.10 (pp.254-5)

October 19

HOMEWORK: Rewrite essay 3.
NR: Jamaica Kincaid: *The Ugly Tourist*

October 26

HOMEWORK: Style exercises.
Rilke and Sontag handout.
WL: Ch.2

November 2

Writing about literature. Discussion on reading.
HOMEWORK: Write an analysis of a poem of your choice.
NR: Hannah Arendt: *Denmark and the Jews*
Paul Celan: *Todes Fuge* (handout)

November 9

Considering the opposition: backing, rebuttal, concession/qualification. In-class writing. Discussion on reading.
Rhodes’ *Editing* on reserve.

November 16

Workshop

November 23

Thanksgiving

November 30

FRESHMAN WRITING SEMINAR (FWS) SYLLABUS

Mr. Christopher Mattson
Office and Box in Spingold Theater
Office hours by appointment
Christophmattson@hotmail.com

WELCOME TO BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY!

litterae scriptae manent

The following is subject to change. We learn through change.
Four quarters make ‘a dollar. Some things will never change.

REQUIREMENTS

Attend all classes. Missed classes will affect your grade. If you must miss a class then you must email me in advance. We are all adults. Treat this requirement responsibly.

There will be assignments done in and out of class. Out of class assignments should be typed, size 12 font, double-spaced, with one-inch margins, while including your name, date and title. Complete all assignments. All assignments may be rewritten to improve your grade. Feel free to ask questions. Missed assignments will affect your grade. The assignments listed in the syllabus are subject to change.

IN-CLASS’WRITING EXERCISES

Everyday you will have a chance to do in-class writing. This writing will be handwritten on a separate sheet of paper and about the topic listed in the syllabus. We will then discuss what you’ve written in relationship to the reading assignment. At the beginning of the next class session you will turn in a one page typed rewrite of your in-class writing assignment. Your handwritten first draft should be attached.

CAMPUS EVENT PAPERS

There will be three 2-3 page campus event papers assigned. Each paper will be about an event on campus. Of the three papers, YOU MUST DO AT LEAST ONE PAPER ON EACH OF THE FOLLOWING: (1) a cultural event or public lecture, (2) a sporting event or a theatrical event and (3) a social event.

The style for the papers will be assigned as: (1) a creative free-write; (2) a narrated description of events; (3) an argument with references that make the event seem either extremely exceptional or repugnant insignificant.

All three campus event papers must be rewritten. First drafts will be returned the following week with suggestions for improvement. Check syllabus for due dates.
THE PROTAGORAS REPORT

Protagoras, the Sophist, is said to have agreed to train Euathlus in the art of pleading. Half of the fee was to be paid when Euathlus should win his first case in court. Euathlus delayed undertaking any suit, and Protagoras eventually sued his pupil for the other half of the agreed fee, urging the following dilemma:

“If this case is decided in my favor, Euathlus must pay me by judgment of the court; and if it is decided in his favor, he must pay me by the terms of our contract. But it must be decided either in my favor or in his. Therefore, he is in any case obligated to pay.”

Euathlus urged the following rebuttal:

“If this case is decided in his favor, I am free by the terms of our contract; and if it is decided in my favor, I am free by the judgment of the court. But it must be decided in his favor or in mine. Therefore, I am in any case freed of the obligation.”

Your second in-class writing exercise will pertain to this topic. **Your rewrite of this exercise should include two additional copies.** I will keep the copy with the first draft. You will keep a copy. A random drawing will then produce a name at the conclusion of every class session. The student whose name is drawn will be given the third copy of everyone’s paper. They will then give a short presentation at the beginning of the next class session that compares the case to a current or interesting situation. These presentations will continue for the rest of the semester so take a chance and make them as interesting as possible.

TEXTBOOKS


SCHEDULE

**WEEK ONE, AUGUST 31**

Welcome to Brandeis University. Are you in the right place? Who are we? What is this? In-class writing exercise #1: How did you get here? Discuss the Syllabus, Academic Integrity, the Library System and us.

**WEEK TWO, SEPTEMBER 7**

Rewrites of #1 due
In-class writing exercise #2: Protagoras
Discuss WOR Introduction. 1-17. WWR 38-57

**WEEK THREE, SEPTEMBER 14**

Rewrites of Protagoras due . . . First Protagoras Reporter will be drawn
CAMPUS EVENT #1 DUE: creative free-write 2-3 pages
In-class writing exercise #3: Who has influenced you the most?
Discuss Ways Of Seeing by John Berger, page 47 in WOR.
WEEK FOUR, SEPTEMBER 21

Protagoras Report
Rewrites of #3 due

In-class writing exercise #4: Relate this quote to your own difficulty. “The great difficulty in education is to get experience out of ideas.” (George Santayana, 1863-1952)

Discuss *The American Scholar* by Ralph Waldo Emerson, page 202 in WOR; And *The “Banking” Concept of Education* by Pablo Freire, page 237 in WOR.

WEEK FIVE, SEPTEMBER 28

Protagoras Report
Rewrite of #4 due

CAMPUS EVENT #1 REWRITE DUE 2-3 pages

In-class writing exercise #5: Descriptively relate to the following quote: “I have played the fool, the gross fool, to believe/The bosom of a friend will hold a secret/Mine own could not contain.” (Philip Massinger, 1586-1640)

Discuss *The American Scholar* by Ralph Waldo Emerson, page 202 in WOR; And *The “Banking” Concept of Education* by Pablo Freire, page 237 in WOR.

WEEKS & OCTOBERS

Protagoras Report

Rewrite of #5 due

In-class writing exercise #6: Comment on the following with details: “Not every problem someone has with his girlfriend is necessarily due to the capitalist mode of production.” (Herbert Marcuse, 1898-1979)

Discuss *What We Talk about When We Talk about Love (Story)* by Raymond Carver, page 75 in WOR.

WEEK SEVEN, OCTOBER 12

Protagoras Report
Rewrite of #6 due

CAMPUS EVENT #2 DUE: narrated description of events 2-3 pages

In-class writing exercise #7: Give example of the following: “Be calm in arguing, for fierceness makes/Error a fault, and truth discourtesy.” (George Herbert, 1593-1633)

Discuss *What We Talk about When We Talk about Love (Story)* by Raymond Carver, page 75 in WOR.

WEEK EIGHT, OCTOBER 19

Protagoras Report
Rewrite of #7 due

In-class writing exercise #8: Argue against the following: “Ever since Adam fools have been in the majority.” (Casimir Delavigne, 1793-1846)

Discuss *When We Dead Awaken* by Adrienne Rich, page 411 in WOR.

WEEK NINE, OCTOBER 26

 Protagoras Report
Rewrite of #8 due

CAMPUS EVENT #2 REWRITE DUE 2-3 pages
In-class writing exercise #9: Create a fictional person then ‘make an argument for or against them. If they are respected, make them seem pathetic. If they are not respected, make them seem the opposite.
Discuss Persuasion: WWR Part Three #6

WEEK TEN, NOVEMBER 2
Protagoras Report
Rewrite of #9 due
In-class writing exercise #10: Using the spirit of the following quote as inspiration, argue against the possibility of Brandeis changing the name of a well known campus building. “I love libraries, but I will be damned if I will ever walk into a ‘Resource Center’.” (Richard J. Needham, 1942)
Discuss Persuasion: WWR Part Three #6

WEEK ELEVEN, NOVEMBER 9
Protagoras Report
Rewrite of #10 due
In-class writing exercise #10: Using the spirit of the following quote as inspiration, argue against the possibility of Brandeis changing the name of a well known campus building. “I love libraries, but I will be damned if I will ever walk into a ‘Resource Center’.” (Richard J. Needham, 1942)
Discuss Persuasion: WWR Part Three #6

WEEK TWELVE, NOVEMBER 16
Protagoras Report
Rewrite of #11 due
In-class writing exercise #11: You’re a genius! During a study break you combined two items that have never been combined before. Explain how your new discovery will affect the world.
Discuss Documentation/Citation: WWR: 333-36 1, 376-399, 565-572

WEEK THIRTEEN, NOVEMBER 17
Protagoras Report
Rewrite of #12 due
In-class writing exercise #12: Use something that you find to be extremely boring and describe how you would be able to make it more exciting.
Discuss Rewriting: WWR Part Six: 487-562

WEEK FOURTEEN, NOVEMBER 30
THE FINAL PROTAGORAS REPORT
Rewrite of #13 due
CAMPU S EVENT #3 REWRITE DUE 2-3 pages
Final in-class exercise: Using what’s been learned in this class, write about another class and provide details supporting the grade you feel you deserve. A two-page rewrite of this exercise will be due for your final.
Open Discussion
Congratulations. Finis. Grades will be determined.
First-year Writing Seminar
Fall 2000

Instructor: Mary Ellen Burd
Office: Rabb 2 15
Office hours: Monday, 2-3; Thursday, 12-1; by appointment
Email: burd@brandeis.edu
Home phone (before 10 p.m.): (617) 491-2074

Texts:
The Concise English Handbook, Fourth Edition (CEH on syllabus)
James W. Kirkland and Collett B. Dilworth, Jr.

The Practice of Writing, Fourth Edition (PW on syllabus)
Robert Scholes, Nancy R. Comley, and Janice Peritz
New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994

Ways of Reading: An Anthology for Writers, Fifth Edition (WR on syllabus)
David Bartholomae and Anthony Petrosky
New York: Bedford/St. Martin’s Press, 1999

Course goals: This class is structured as a writing workshop. From pre-writing through drafting and revising, we will work together on writing clear, persuasive, objective papers. Issues of rhetoric, audience, and style will be considered. In addition, we will devote some time to research strategies and proper documentation.

Assignments: You will be required to write six short 1-page assignments, two 5-page essays, and a 10-page research paper. I will hand out assignments and essay topics in class. All assignments completed outside class must be typed and double-spaced. Please use a 12-point font, and set margins (top, bottom, right, and left) at one inch.

Revision policy: Both 5-page essays will be workshopped in class. Please also consider making use of the University Writing Center, or setting up additional outside-of-class workshops with your classmates. Whenever you turn in a final draft, please include your most recent rough draft and any workshop comments you’ve received from your peers.

Conferences: You must schedule at least two conferences with me-one before and one after mid-semester. I’ll make appointment sheets available during the first few weeks of class. Two meetings are mandatory; please feel free to schedule additional meetings with me as necessary.
**Week 1: Introduction**  
August 31  
discussion of syllabus, goals

**Week 2: Practicing Writing**  
September 5  
reading due: “Practicing Writing: Situation, Form, Process” (PW pp. 3-18)  
in-class short paper #1

September 7  
reading due: “The Banking Concept of Education” (WR pp. 347-359)  
formation of peer groups

**Week 3: Reflection**  
September 12  
reading due: “School Days Revisited’ (PW pp.37-42)  
“From Thing to Thought” (PW pp. 47-48)  
“From Experience to Thought” (PW pp. 49-52)  
in-class short paper #2

September 14  
reading due: “The Achievement of Desire” (WR pp. 620-639)

**Week 4: Persuasion**  
September 19  
reading due: “Persuasion in Advertising” (PW pp. 70-73)  
“Political Persuasion” (PW pp. 77-81)  
essay #1 due to peer groups

September 21  
reading due: “Ways of Seeing” (WR pp.104-127)  
workshop

**Week 5: Narration**  
September 26  
reading due: “Organizing Time” (PW pp. 93-101)  
“Narrating an Event” (PW pp. 110-115)  
final draft of essay #1 due

September 28  
reading due: “Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl” (WR pp. 457-495)

**Week 5: Description**  
October 3  
reading due: “Point of View in Description” (PW pp. 117-121)  
“A Place with a History” (PW pp. 121-126)  
workshop brainstorming for short paper #3

October 5  
reading due: “An Extravagance of Laughter” (WR pp. 254-289)
Week 11: Argumentation continued
November 14
reading due: “An Educator Considers Class Myths and Realities” (PW pp. 193-199)
“Two Positions on Bilingual Education” (PW pp. 210-218)
short paper #5 due

November 16
reading due: “Of the Training of Black Men” (WR pp. 238-248)
workshop to refine research thesis

Week 12: Style
November 21
reading due: Orwell: “Shooting an Elephant” (handout)

November 23 NO CLASS

Week 13: Synthesis
November 28
reading due: “Working People” (PW pp. 278-288)
in-class short paper #6

November 30
LAST CLASS!
reading due: “‘Indians’: Textualism, Morality, and the Problem of History” (WR pp. 672-689)

Week 14: RESEARCH PAPER
Friday, December 8
research paper due; please place paper in my English Department mailbox
Welcome!

This course is designed to help you improve your already sharp writing skills. The emphasis will be on developing your writing style and voice, learning various techniques to structure logical arguments, and discovering new ways of thinking about your writing process. This course will also strengthen your academic research skills as we practice the ancient art of conducting research and review the proper method of documenting other sources (that is, there will be a session on academic honesty). We will cover strategies for approaching various kinds of writing assignments; taking a paper through the process of pre-writing, drafting, and revising. At the end of this course you will have learned how to write in an academic setting with greater fluency, style, and confidence. Along the way, you will not only receive constructive guidance from me, but from each other. We will workshop papers in groups later in the term as you begin your final paper. This will provide you with a way of improving your editing skills and also offer you an understanding about how the writing process looks from a view outside your own writing. I encourage you to meet with me during my office hours to discuss your writing progress and I require one midterm conference.

Texts: *The Norton Reader* and *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, Fourth Ed.
*Both texts are available at the Brandeis University bookstore.*

Week 1: Introduction
Review of syllabus. In-class writing: diagnostic assignment, pair-up and interview one another. Write up the interview organizing the "data" according to your own categories.
Reading Assignment: *Norton Reader, “Gun Crazy”* by Dorothy Alison, p. 275-78 and “Get a Knife, Get a Dog but Get Rid of Guns” by Molly Ivins, p. **404-5.**
Writing Assignment: Analysis paper - 250 words, typed, double-spaced. Compare and contrast both works. Other questions to ask yourself: What is the appeal in each work? Alison in her own subtle way is making an argument about guns, what is that argument? What else is Alison drawing our focus on? Why do you think this is, draw on the text for proof of your position. In what way does she make her “argument” that is similar/different from the way Ivins makes hers? What evidence does Ivins provide to make her argument? Do you find this convincing, why or why not? Which strategies are convincing and which are not, why?

Week 2: Narration and Persuasion - Identifying the Message
Discuss readings, analyze genre and styles. What is the difference between narration and persuasion? How does the difference in genre determine the different approaches that can/are made? How do we determine what is being claimed?
Reading Assignment: Read CRMS pages 1-26 and “Muddy Road” and “A Parable” Norton Reader p. 1088
Writing Assignment: Choose one of the parables and write a 2-3 page typed paper, double-spaced. Consider: What is the parable trying to tell us? Provide proof of your position by drawing on the text.

Week 3: Rhetorical Strategies/Persuasive Writing
Review reading. Discussion: What is rhetoric? Generate ideas for a topic and strategies for persuasive writing, such as, definition, cause and effect, and syllogism. In-class brainstorming exercise to generate topic and discover thesis ideas.
Reading Assignment: “The Case for Animal Rights” by Tom Regan and “The Case for the Use of Animals in Biomedical Research” by Carl Cohen, Norton Reader 696-715 and CRMS pages 27-38
Writing Assignment: Taking some of the ideas you generated in class for persuasive writing, write a 2-3 page typed essay on the topic of animal rights. Write for or against, your choice.

Week 4: Point/Counterpoint
Discuss readings.
Reading Assignment: “Letter from a Birmingham Prison” by Martin Luther King, Jr. CRMS pages 301-19
Writing Assignment: Take a look at the paper you wrote last week. Now, write a 2-3 paper from the opposite point of view. That is, if you disagree with the notion of animal rights write as someone who agrees. Be sure to include some counter arguments, which will be your own feelings about the issue. Please note, do not repeat the work in your last paper, this is an
opportunity to revise and fine-tune the arguments you made in that paper, not to reprint them.

Week 5: Style and Methods of Approach
Discussion of reading - what makes an argument work? Discussion of style -- what is it, who has it and how do we get it? Overview of diction and syntax and some strategies for writing. In class exercises (“Some Sentences”) and discussion of a sample of Virginia Woolf’s writing (from CRMS p. 472).
Reading Assignment: CRMS pages 84-105 and “Shooting an Elephant” by George Orwell Norton Reader, p. 842-47
Writing Assignment: In 2-3 pages analyze Orwell’s essay being sure to answer the following questions: What is the thesis statement? Where is it located in this essay? Why is it located there? Identify elements of Orwell’s style, how does Orwell use style to enhance his argument? Think about the reading in the CRMS on “Topics” and apply it to Orwell’s essay. Discuss the various methods by which Orwell makes his argument and discuss why you think he made these choices (not only because they work, but because they contribute to the story as a whole in a specific way).

Week 6: Building an Argument
Lecture: discussion of reading, logical fallacies, ideas about audience.
Reading Assignment: CRMS pages 105-120 and “Socrates’ Apology” CRMS p. 195-209
Writing Assignment: Socrates, despite his best efforts, lost his own case. How would you defend Socrates so that he doesn’t get the hemlock? Write a 4-5 page typed paper using some of the rhetorical strategies we learned that you think might get him off the hook. Perhaps strengthen those strategies that Socrates does use or discard them and find others that you think will be more persuasive. Your grade will include a final verdict: live, exile, or death . . .

Week 7: Scientific Arguments
We’ve looked at persuasive essays, juridical arguments, what other types of writing reveal different aspects of persuasive writing strategies?
Reading Assignment: “Krakatau” by Edward O. Wilson in Norton Reader, p. 975-82
Writing Assignment: 2-3 page paper, analyzing Wilson’s argument and his use of information.

Week 8: Topics and abstracts
Discuss readings. In class writing assignment and peer review of last week’s writing.
Reading Assignment: CRMS p. 141-70 (just review this material)

Writing Assignment: Develop a topic and write a two-paragraph abstract. For the topic, pick an issue we have not discussed in class. It can be from other readings, newspaper, internet; it must be complex enough to allow you research it. For the abstract, be sure to include the following information: your topic and thesis; some questions will your paper address; identify how will you answer these questions, that is, what sources or kinds of sources will you be using to answer these questions.

Midterm conferences - please meet with me to discuss your topic and abstract.

Week 9: Creative Arguments
Discuss readings.
Reading Assignment: “The Ugly Tourist” by Jamaica Kincaid, Norton Reader, p. 593-97; “The Death of the Profane: A Commentary on the Genre of Legal Writing” by Patricia J. Williams, Norton Reader, p. 556-61;
Writing Assignment: 2-3 page paper, analyze these two essays. What is the thesis of each? What kind of information do they use to support their arguments? Is this convincing? I will hand back your abstracts.

Week 10: Researched Writing
Discussion on how to summarize, quote, and paraphrase and how to avoid plagiarism.
Reading Assignment: CRMS p. 256-92
Writing Assignment: Write an annotated bibliography on the topic you have developed. Due the following week.

Week 11: Getting Started
Discuss readings: arranging material
Reading Assignment: “Notes on Punctuation” by Lewis Thomas, Norton Reader, 566-568
Writing Assignment: Begin first draft of 10 page research paper

Week 12: No class - Holiday

Week 13: Revisions
Small Group Writing Workshop: We will pair up in twos and edit each others work. Bring in first draft of paper.
No Reading Assignment for this week
Writing Assignment: Revise your first draft.

Week 14: Conclusions and endings
Last class: I will return your first draft. Final questions and answers. Fill out evaluations.

Final 10 page paper due one week after last class